

COMMON SENSE NEEDED ON  
ARSENIC ISSUE**HON. DOUG BEREUTER**

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 2, 2001*

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues the following editorial from the August 2, 2001, Lincoln Journal Star. The editorial highlights the need to move beyond the rhetoric and examine the arsenic issue in a rational manner.

Clearly, it is important to get the full story and listen to those who would be most affected by the proposed changes. Many State and local officials as well as water system administrators have expressed concern about the problems which could be caused by the proposed changes. Everyone recognizes the importance of providing safe drinking water for all of our Nation's citizens. Also, some changes in the arsenic standard may well be justified. However, it makes sense to base these changes on sound science rather than emotion.

[From the Lincoln Journal Star, Aug. 2, 2001]

## OF ARSENIC, AND ART OF GOVERNING

President George Bush is getting a bum rap on the arsenic issue.

New EPA chief Christine Whitman was neither wacko nor callous when she withdrew new standards for arsenic in drinking water proposed by the Clinton administration that slashed the previous limit by 80 percent.

Neither was Nebraska's entire House delegation oblivious to health concerns when it voted shoulder-to-shoulder—unsuccessfully—against a proposal to force the administration to restore the new standards.

The real reason Bush is undergoing such a bludgeoning on arsenic is because it's so easy for his political enemies to portray him as a heartless boob. Arsenic is nasty. Who could possibly be against removing this poison from our drinking water?

Real life, however, is often complicated, involving tradeoffs in which the costs and payoffs are matters of speculation. As a New York Times story put it, "... the setting of environmental risks is as much art as science, one that entails innumerable assumptions about risks, costs and benefits."

The Clinton administration proposed to cut the allowed level for arsenic from 50 parts per billion to 10 parts per billion.

Earlier the administration had toyed with the idea of setting the limit at 5 parts per billion, but decided that would be too expensive. So it upped the new limit to 10 parts per billion. That's still too low for many of Nebraska's communities. The city of York will have to ante up \$12 million to meet the new regulation. The city of Alliance will have to spend \$6.5 million, or \$650 per person. In all, the new water regulations would cost 51 Nebraska communities \$97 million.

One may notice that folks in those communities have not been perishing in huge numbers of arsenic-related diseases during the past 50 years. The health benefits of change in arsenic standards involve relatively small numbers in comparison with the nation's 281 million residents.

The reduction in the arsenic level is estimated to prevent 37 to 56 cases of bladder and lung cancer and 21 to 30 deaths annually throughout the nation, according to The New York Times. If the standard were set at 20 parts per billion, the benefit would diminish to preventing an estimated 19 to 20 cases of bladder and lung cancer, and 10 to 11 deaths per year nationally.

Most European countries have set arsenic levels at 20 parts per billions. The World Health Organization recommends 10 parts per billion.

Often unnoticed in the rhetoric over arsenic is that fact that the new regulation was not scheduled to take effect until 2006. Whitman's withdrawal of the new regulation allowed for nine months more study on the "art" of setting environmental standards. Her action hardly deserves the contempt it unleashed.

ON THE 53RD ANNIVERSARY OF  
INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE**HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 2, 2001*

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate India on its 53rd anniversary as an independent democratic republic.

Fifty-three years ago India under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi forged a path towards freedom and democracy by declaring its independence from Britain. With independence India undertook anew a responsibility as a voice of other newly independent nations in the post-colonial world.

India is the world's largest democracy, and in the next fifty years it will become the world's most populous nation. As we celebrate India's independence it is important for us to reflect on the achievements of the previous 53 years while at the time looking forward to the future.

India and the United States share much in common. Both countries sought independence to create great nations based on freedom and liberty. Both nations also sought to establish a more prosperous future for its people.

As we enter a new century it is important for the United States to recognize India's importance as a great democracy and as a force for stability in South Asia. While India faces many challenges it has nonetheless undertaken an important role of working towards greater prosperity and stability in the region.

India is of immense strategic importance to the United States. Being the only democracy and one of three nuclear powers in the region India has the potential to be a force for economic development and political stability.

South Asia is a vast region that faces many challenges, from the civil war in Afghanistan to great poverty that still haunts much of the region. It is therefore vital for the United States to maintain a dialogue with as many nations in the region as possible. India's cooperation in bringing about stability to the region will be essential.

Over the past ten years the United States and India have taken concrete steps to improve their bilateral relations. Trade, investment, and military cooperation have played a major role in bringing the two nations closer.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the India Caucus I have come to recognize the importance of India in South Asia. I am also proud to have worked on making additional funds available to India and other nations of South Asia for the creation of regional emergency institution similar to our own FEMA, so that we can save more lives in a future natural disaster.

As you know Mr. Speaker, President Clinton worked very hard to foster U.S.-Indian relations and to bring greater regional stability. I

encourage President Bush, to continue America's leadership in South Asia. I particularly encourage President Bush to call upon Pakistan to return to a democratic government and to work with India for peace in Kashmir.

As the United States Representative of the second largest South Asian community in the United States I would like to congratulate India on this achievement, and seek greater understanding and relations between our two great democracies.

## TRIBUTE TO ANDY COMBS

**HON. GREG WALDEN**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 2, 2001*

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, colleagues, I rise today to publicly thank a member of my Washington, D.C. staff for his tireless efforts on behalf of the good people of Oregon's Second Congressional District. Andy Combs recently departed my staff to pursue a law degree at the University of Oregon. I wish him well in this new endeavor and know that he will excel both in law school and as a lawyer.

Andy comes from Dora, a small town on the southern Oregon coast. He graduated from my alma mater, the University of Oregon, and after serving admirably as a staff member in the Oregon Legislature he embarked to Washington, D.C. to join my staff. He brought those desirable "small town values" to the nation's capital and to how he treated the people who sought assistance from my office.

Andy was more than just "the guy at the front desk." He helped families get the inside track to the sights and sounds of Washington, D.C. Time and again, he brought history alive as he led tours of the Capitol for people who had come nearly 3,000 miles so that their children could better understand the federal government and our bold history. Andy arranged their tours, took their calls, answered their questions. In short, Mr. Speaker, Andy made their day and their trip.

I can't think of a time during his service in my office that a visitor went away disappointed. He attended faithfully to every detail and literally went the extra mile to make sure families could see the White House, the Capitol and other sights in the area.

Moreover, Andy made Oregonians feel at ease and at home when they walked in the door. He possesses that warm and helpful attitude that is too often lacking in a big city. I have a significant stack of letters from Oregonians that took the time to write after their trip to Washington, D.C. to thank me for Andy's treatment of them and his dogged determination to make sure their experience was memorable. Andy was also instrumental in recognizing when something needed to be done, taking the initiative to complete myriad projects and lend others a helping hand.

His ability and intellect will serve him well as a member of the bar. And his likeable attitude will serve him well in the courtroom. In short, Mr. Speaker, Andy's a difficult person to replace. Andy, thanks for a job well done and good luck in the future.